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A
REPRESENTATION
OF THE
Present State
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RELIGION,

With Regard to
*Infidelity, Heresy, Impiety,
and Popery:*

Drawn up and Agreed to by Both
Houses of Convocation
I N
IRELAND,

Pursuant to Her MAJESTY's
Command in Her Royal Licence.

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T O T H E
QUEEN's most Excellent Majesty.

A Representation of the Present State of Religion with Regard to Infidelity, Herefy, Impiety, and Popery ; Drawn up and Agreed to by both Houses of Convocation in Ireland, Pursuant to Her Majesty's Command in Her Royal Licence.

May it please your Majesty.

WE the Archbishops and Bishops, and the rest of the Clergy of this Your M A J E S T Y's Kingdom of Ireland, in Convocation Assembled, do joyfully Embrace this Opportunity of Returning Your M A J E S T Y our Unfeigned and Hearty Thanks, for convening us in a NATIONAL SYNOD: And by Your R O Y A L Licence rendring us Useful to all the Ends and Purposes of our meeting in an Ecclesiastical Body.

YOUR MAJESTY has herein Imitated the Best and Holiest Princes, in the more early and flourishing Ages of the Church ; who have maintain'd It in all its Rights and Privileges, and afforded their aid and assistance in all Emergencies ; in supporting its Discipline, confirming and enforcing its Censures, and preserving to the Governours of it inviola-

ble those Powers, with which CHRIST had Intrusted them, for the Suppression of Vice and Wickedness, and for promoting Religion and Piety in the World. We being likewise incited by so Great an Example; and encouraged by Your MAJESTY's tender Care, and gracious Patronage of us, shall, by the Blessing of GOD, endeavour to imitate those ancient Bishops and Pastors of the Church, in consulting and resolving upon all Things, which we conceive most for the Benefit and Advantage thereof; and in an unfeigned Obedience to Your MAJESTY, as in all other Matters recommended to us in your Your Royal Licence, so particularly in

A REPRESENTATION of the State of Religion among us, with Regard to Infidelity, Heresy, Impiety, and Popery.

Infidelity. I. IT is with the greatest Pleasure and Satisfaction, that we can acquaint Your MAJESTY, that DEISM and INFIDELITY, have not as yet arriv'd to that amazing Height, at which they are represented to be, in some other Parts of Your Dominions: so as to appear open and barefaced, to be publickly own'd and abetted, to be carried on by secret Combinations of Men, and not without great Trouble and Charge, to be propagated by regular and concerted Measures: Tho' we cannot say, that the subtle Designs and restless Endeavours of those Advocates for *Infidelity* have been altogether without Effect in this Kingdom; the Infection hath reach'd us in some Degree, and the Pestilence, which hath
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hitherto walked in Darkness, has begun of late to disclose it self.

MANY of those *Atheistical* Books and Pamphlets, wrote and dispersed in our Neighbour Nation, have been sent or brought over hither, and some of them Reprinted here, which are with great Artifice calculated to undermine the Foundations of Christianity, and expose all that is accounted Sacred among us to Contempt and Scorn. By this Means the Seeds of *Infidelity* are sown among us, the Minds of too many are poisoned, and insensibly carried on to Disesteem of all reveal'd Religion, and the mysterious Truths of the Gospel; They are inclin'd too strongly to set up the Light of Nature for their only Guide, and satisfy their Consciences with a Religion purely Moral, and conceive a Coldness and Indifference towards the Constitution of our Holy Church.

BUT, tho' this Mystery of *Infidelity* and *Atheism* hath made these Steps among us, yet we have reason to Bless GOD, that it is not come to that Extremity, that plain Attempts should be made for the gaining of Profelytes to them: Or, that they should be openly spread through the Nation with Impunity. For *Toland*. when a Person, (in all probability an Emissary sent over among us, and supported for the Propagation of *Infidelity*,) wrote an Impious Book, with Design to confound Faith and Knowledge, and to prove there cou'd be no such thing as Mystery, because we can believe nothing beyond the immediate Object of our Senses; The Representatives of the People in Parliament expressed their just Detestation and Abhorrence of it, ordering the Book to be burnt before the Parliament House, and ob-

liged the Author to fly the Kingdom. The like Zeal, for the Glory of GOD and his Truth, they shewed upon Occasion of another Attempt made with the same Design; A Pamphlet being Published, to shew, that by a strong Faith, Men may be Translated to Eternal Life, without passing through Death, from a ridiculous Application of those Texts of Scripture, which speak of our freedom from the Spiritual Death of Sin, and Eternal Death hereafter, to a tem-

Asgil. poral Separation of Soul and Body:

The Author was not only expell'd the House of Commons by a publick Vote, but declar'd *Incapable of being thereafter chosen or return'd a Member of any Succeeding Parliament in this Kingdom.* Nor can we conceal from Your MAJESTY, upon this Occasion, how far your Courts of Justice in this Kingdom have Exerted themselves in the Condemnation of a

Emlin. Dissenting Preacher; who, for publickly denying the *Divinity* of CHRIST, was fined and imprisoned, and forced to withdraw himself out of this Kingdom.

AS to the Causes of *Infidelity*, We observe to Your MAJESTY there are chiefly Two, that have occasioned the spreading thereof, not only in Your MAJESTY's Dominions, but also universally over all *Europe*.

THE *First* is that of the *Socinian Heresy*, which hath Distinguished away the *Divinity* and *Satisfaction* of CHRIST, and turn'd our whole Religion into *Figure* and *Meer Analogy*, which, by immediate consequence, resolves it all into humane Reason.

THE *Other* is, that gross Superstition of the Church of *Rome*; which hath turn'd their Publick Worship and Administration of the Sacra-

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ments into outward Pomp and Pageantry ; This, together with that palpable Hypocrisy of calculating many of the Doctrines of their Church for Gain, is so fully detected, and become so odious, even to those of their own Communion, that great Numbers too easily run into the other Extreme of utterly rejecting all reveal'd Religion. This *Infidelity*, which took its first Rise from Popish Countries, hath Spread itself among Protestants ; and is catch'd up greedily by such, whose immoral Lives make them despair of Salvation in a true Religion, and is now growing dangerous to all Communities of Christians.

THAT which hath not a little contributed to the Promoting of those Principles of *Prophaness* and *Infidelity* in these Nations in particular, is that Neglect and Disesteem of *Academical Education*, which hath of late so much prevail'd : and, instead thereof, the placing of Youth under the Care of *Foreigners* and other *private Tutors* ; whose sufficiency, in reference to Learning ; and whose Principles, in regard to our Religion and Government, we have Reason to suspect.

II. BUT tho' *Infidelity* hath been check'd and discountenanc'd in its first Appearance by our good Laws, *Herefy.* and the Zeal of our Magistrates in putting them in Execution : yet it hath been out of the Power of both to put a Stop to those many HERETICAL *Opinions*, and *Wild Enthusiastical Notions* still rife and prevailing among us. Such as are not only the private Delusions of some particular Persons, but most

of them publickly maintained and propagated, by distinct Bodies, under different Denominations, according to the Variety of their *Heretical* Tenets, as *Independents*, *Anabaptists*, *Muggletonians*, *Quakers*, &c. Many of whose Opinions are horridly Blasphemous and Detestable.

BUT none of them, as we humbly conceive, at present require so much the watchful Eye of the Government, as that growing Sect of the QUAKERS, who cannot properly come under the Denomination of Christians: They flatly rejecting both the Sacraments of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*; and, when it is closely urged to them, do in Truth and in Reality allow of no CHRIST but that *within* them. It may be justly wonder'd at, that a Sect of Men, who have no fixt Principles, most of them confus'd and unintelligible, deducible neither from Reason nor Scripture, and quite beside the common Sense of all Mankind, should prevail in the World; and yet considering the many secular Advantages which concur to the Increase of their Numbers, it may justly be feared, that, without some effectual Methods of restraining them, and stopping their Progress, they may in a little Time become formidable to Church and State.

AS, that their Religion is with great Subtily calculated to be *within* them, and by that means all Obligation to the external Duties of Religion is cut off, which leaves them a Latitude for the Committal of all Immoralities, which can be conceal'd. And thus they can retain a specious Pretence of Religion, without any Trouble and Avocation from the Pursuit of Gain, upon which they are of all People the most intent:

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And accordingly, that they have formed themselves into a Society or Company for Trade and Traffick: which renders them so firmly united; because their great Design is to manage and promote their common Interest: Nor can they be divided by Opinions in Religion, since every one among them may believe what he pleases.

THAT, under Pretence and Colour of Religion, they have constant Annual and Quarterly Meetings for settling a Course of speedy Intelligence for Rates of Things, and the Rise and Fall of all Commodities.

THAT they are exempted from all those legal Services, both troublesome and chargeable, to which those of our Communion are liable; and so freed from any Diversion or Intermifion from the Prosecution of their particular Trades and Callings.

THAT they have their Agents both here and in *Great Britain*, to inform them of every Thing in Agitation, which they conceive to the Disadvantage of their Party, how profitable soever to the Publick. And that, according to the Method, which of late hath been found the most effectual for carrying on the Designs of a Sect or Party, They are said to have a greater Sum in Bank, by a common Contribution, than any other Sect among us; to be applied in their Favour at any seasonable Juncture which may offer, for the obtaining any Exemption or Privilege; that they now think themselves considerable enough to Address and Compliment Your MAJESTY's Chief Governours upon their Accession to the Government, and take upon them to give a publick Opposition to the passing of any Bills, which may be to the Prejudice of their Sect;

Sect ; and are heard by their Council for that Purpose. All which Advantages they manage for the gaining and securing of Profelytes to their *Heretical Opinions*.

TO which may be added, the Encouragement given to others to come to them, by their being indulged in their not taking of Oaths ; as if those, who cannot be justly deemed Christians, were of greater Veracity than the rest of Your MAJESTY's Subjects.

A N D here we think we cannot discharge our Duty to Your MAJESTY, and that Trust reposed in us by Your ROYAL Licence, without a *Representation* likewise of many other *false Opinions*, and *dangerous Errors and Practices* of pernicious Consequence, not only to the Establish'd Constitution of our Church, but expressly contrary to the Word of GOD.

THE Doctrines of our Church have been openly and in Print represented as *unsound and erroneous* ; our publick Worship and Discipline branded with the odious Names of *Popery* and *Superstition* ; and grievous Reflections are cast upon the *Act of Uniformity*, and all other Laws in force for the Defence and Support of it ; though, thro' the Indulgence of Your MAJESTY's Government, the Persons that thus insult our Church, are not restrain'd from the free Exercise of their Religion.

PAPERS and Pamphlets have been industriously dispersed in Derogation of Your MAJESTY's Title and Government ; the SOLEMN LEAGUE and COVENANT reprinted and handed thro' the Kingdom, together with the *Presbyterian Directory*, and other seditious and Fanatical Pieces, by Pedlars and Vagabonds. And there is but too just Reason to fear, that,

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at their pretended Ordinations, the dissenting Preachers are obliged to take the SOLEMN LEAGUE and COVENANT; they never yet having made any publick Renunciation of it; and it being required in the *Directory* as a necessary Preliminary to their Ordination.

OUR Office of Matrimony is traduced in Print as *Unlawful* and *Idolatrous*. Sermons are preached and published, wherein 'tis expressly said,

Boyle's
Sermons.

That the Holy Eucharist is turned into an Engine for advancing a State-Faction, and the common Table of our Lord confined, by Arbitrary Enclosures, to a Party; and that Religion is thereby too far debased to serve mean and unworthy Purposes. The Canons of the Church are asserted to be *not only Unnecessary, but contrary to the Church's Interest and Edification*: And it is likewise affirm'd, *That by the Laws of CHRIST, Diocesan Prelates must be cashier'd from the Number of lawful Pastors, and are charged with heinous Schism.*

BESIDES the Methods already mentioned, by which they expose our Doctrine and Worship, blast the Credit of our holy Orders, and poyson the Minds of Men with their erroneous Opinions; there are other Practices with which they carry on the Design and Interest of their Sect and Party by a high Hand, without Fear of Law or Magistrates: By incorporating into distinct Communities, and forming themselves into *Sessions, Presbyteries, Classical and Provincial Synods*, as Courts of Judicature, wherein they proceed by Information and Libel, Examination of Witnesses, Administration of Oaths with Hands lifted up to the most High GOD, and by issuing out Summons, and sometimes even
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to Members of the establish'd Church, and then by proceeding to a definitive Sentence, from whence there is no Appeal. In their *Synods*, both *Classical* and *Provincial*, they exercise *Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction* in a Solemn and Publick Manner, not only with all the Forms of Adjournalment from time to time, and from one Place to another; but by Delegation of their Power thro' many Parts of the Kingdom. Practices dangerous to Your MAJESTY's *Prerogative*, and which, without sufficient Authority received, would be no less than *Premunire* in any Members of the establish'd Church.

SEMINARIES are set up, not only for teaching Philosophy, which should only be taught in Your MAJESTY's University of *Dublin*, but for training Youth up in *Anti-Episcopal Principles*, and, it may be highly presumed, in *Anti-Monarchical* also; and this without taking the Oaths by Law requir'd. From hence they are supplied with *Emissaries*, who are dispersed with Commission thro' all Parts of the Kingdom, even to the setting up *Conventicles* in Towns intirely conformable; where they had no Call or Invitation, and where no Dissenting Meetings had been for many Years before. And, when the Zeal and Authority of the Bishops and Magistrates did seasonably exert it self, to stop their Progress by *Prosecutions at Law*, they, by their Interest IN A LATE GOVERNMENT, obtain'd the Writ of *Noli Prosequi*.

FOR some Years past, when Dissenters began to conceive great Hopes from an *Advantageous Juncture*, and the Course of Publick Affairs seem'd to move with a favourable Aspect towards them; They erected large Piles of Build-
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ings in the form of our Churches, in the midst of Towns and Cities, and (notwithstanding the Opposition given) even in the very Neighbourhood of our Cathedrals.

THE Clergy of the Establish'd Church have been openly insulted in the Discharge of their Office. Several Dissenting Teachers continued their publick Course of Preaching without taking the *Oath of Abjuration*; and were it not for the seasonable and timely Security of the Church, provided by Your MAJESTY's Foresight, and Tender Care of it, by the TEST CLAUSE, in the Act *To prevent the further Growth of Popery*; the Dissenters had, in all probability, by this time engrossed the Corporations and Civil Offices in most Parts of this Kingdom.

A Publick Motion hath been made in Parliament for the Suspension of all the Penal Laws against them; and when a *Toleration for Dissenters* was in Agitation, upon the same Foot with that of their Brethren in *England*, and it was signified, that an Indulgence might have been obtained for them, with the Sacramental Test; it was rejected with Scorn, and said to be *A giving them a Stone instead of Bread, and a Serpent instead of a Fish*. Nor can it ever be forgotten, what Numbers of them positively refused the *Oath of Allegiance*, when the Militia was to be arrayed in this Kingdom for Opposing the Invasion of the Pretender.

NOR are their Endeavours slackned by the late Change of the MINISTRY, so visibly brought about by the Hand of GOD; who (as in the usual Course of his Providence He loves then to interpose, when Affairs come to such

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Extremity, that they are apparently out of all humane Powers) inspired your ROYAL Heart with Sagacity, to foresee the Danger we were in : And with Courage to gather up the Reins, and give Things a sudden Turn, when we were upon the Brink of a Precipice ; and that a few Steps further might have overturn'd our whole Constitution both of Church and State. And there is but too great Reason to fear, that they are still restless and indefatigable ; that they increase the Number of their Emissaries, and carry on the Interest of their Party by *Common Funds*: And here we humbly observe to Your MAJESTY, how just Cause there is to be apprehensive, that the Great and ROYAL BOUNTY of *Twelve Hundred Pounds* per Annum, which hath been allow'd them upon the *Establishment* so many Years before Your Happy Accession to the Throne, hath been applied to the considerable Increase of the Number of Fanatical and Dissenting Teachers, and to the Support and Promoting of Faction and Schism among us ; of which the Body of the Nation, in this Honourable *House of Commons*, were so sensible, that they Voted it *An unnecessary Branch of the Establishment*.

THE Number of their Teachers and Expectants (as they call their young *Probationers*) is considerably increas'd, so as to be now a Burthen to them greater than they are able to bear, were it not for that great Allowance of *Twelve Hundred Pounds* per Annum.

AND here we humbly acquaint Your MAJESTY, that the *FRENCH REFUGEES*, who, upon their first Coming over into this Kingdom, did all conform to the established Church ;

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Church; and were treated with utmost Tender-
ness and Humanity; and great Numbers of
them subsisted at an immense Charge for these
Twenty Years past; in Hopes, that the more
they were acquainted with our Constitution
and Worship, they would more firmly adhere
to the Communion of our Church: Yet some
Years before Your MAJESTY's happy Accession
to the Throne, they were broken into *Non-
Conforming* Congregations; and this in Contra-
diction to the known Principles, as well of o-
ther Reformed Churches and Divines, as of
those of *France*; who, since the Reformation,
have kept in strict Communion with our Church,
and on all Occasions given ample Approbati-
ons of our Doctrine and Worship. In all like-
lihood their Numbers will be considerably in-
creased, when GOD shall bless these Nations
with PEACE; so that there is just Cause to
fear, that, unless some effectual Expedient be
found out to bring them into Union with the
Establish'd Church, these divided Congregations
may be perpetuated to Posterity; and that
their Children at least will fall in with those se-
veral Sectaries among us, who will omit no
Art or Industry to confirm them in their Se-
paration; by which Means that great Charity
may end in the Promoting of SCHISM in the
Church, and FACTION in the State.

WE humbly take leave to lay before
Your MAJESTY some few of the Principal
Causes of the Rise and Growth of these *Here-
sies* and *Schisms* among us.

THE first Cause we Assign is that of the
great Number of Sectaries, who came over
into this Kingdom, in the time of that
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Wicked and Detestable Usurper *Oliver Cromwell*; They having suck'd in all the Taint and Poyson of those late Times, spread that *Enthusiasm*, which, under a specious Pretence of Sanctity, is ever accompanied with a Mixture of Sedition, through the Kingdom.

ANOTHER Cause, we humbly take leave to mention, is the Lenity of the Government and merciful Temper and Disposition of the Establish'd Church; which is so far from a Spirit of Persecution, that it hardly consults its own Safety; notwithstanding all those, as well Secret Designs as Barefaced Practices, to undermine and destroy it. Our Sectaries, and particularly the Presbyterians, have been always treated with the utmost Clemency and Mildness, and with a Connivance at their many Violations of the Laws, in breaking in upon our Establishment both Civil and Ecclesiastical. They not being considered as People, whose *Fundamental Principle* it is never to submit to any Rules or Forms of Worship, which are establish'd by publick Authority: when at the same time the private Constitutions of a *Presbytery* shall be Sacred and inviolable. That every Concession made to them hath proved an Incouragement to demand more, and for a further Usurpation upon us; that they never cou'd be Prevail'd upon to propose or accept any Terms of Communion; that the constant Tenor of their Discourse is MODERATION, and *Forbearance* towards weak and tender Consciences, when they are in a Low Condition: But, where they have the Ascendency,

dency, to call **TOLERATION** *Establishing Iniquity by a Law.*

THE great Necessity of some *Acts*, for the Preservation of our Constitution, will further appear to Your MAJESTY ; when we humbly pray it may be observed, that however Disagreeing and Contradictory to one another the Principles of all our Sectaries are : Yet time hath shewn how that they can all fall in with any disgusted Party, even of our own Communion ; and can also close with *Deists*, *Socinians*, and all the *Enemies of Revealed Religion*, nay, even with *Papists* themselves, to Dissolve the present Frame of Government, notwithstanding their Cry against *Popery*.

III. WE are unwilling to Grieve *Impiety.* Your MAJESTY's truly Christian Heart with a *Representation* of those manifold IMPIETIES, and Scandalous *Immoralities*, which are so rife and prevailing among us.

WE are not without frequent Instances of *Poligamy* and Incestuous Marriages ; The *Holy Name* of GOD is habitually prophaned by horrid Oaths and Imprecations ; Wicked and Blasphemous *HEALTHS* are frequently used by Persons Disaffected to our Constitution : Infomuch that the Words of our *Litany*, wherein we pray to be delivered from *Plague*, *Pestilence*, and *Famine*, *Battle*, *Murther*, and *Sudden Death*, have been turned into a bitter Curse upon all *Archbishops*, *Bishops*, *Priests* and *Deacons*, and all *Congregations* committed to their Charge who refuse to drink to the *Glorious and Immortal Memory* of the Dead. The wicked

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and detestable Custom of *Duelling* prevails from a false Notion of Honour, in direct Contradiction to the plain Commands of CHRIST and the Spirit of the Gospel, by which the Land is frequently defiled with Blood, *Rioting* and *Drunkenness*, *Adultery*, *Fornication* and *Lasciviousness*, do so much abound among us, that a Sense of the heinous and damning Nature of them seems to be much worn out of the Minds of Men. Many, who pass for Members of the Established Church, rarely appear at the publick Worship of GOD; and many more of those who do, yet seldom frequent the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*, unless for an *Office* or *Employment*; and upon such *Worldly Motives*, professed Enemies of our Constitution will OCCASIONALLY Communicate with us.

THE Clergy have not been wanting in their Endeavours to put a stop to these Flagrant and Barefaced *Impieties*, but are frequently Born down by a Torrent of Vice, and trampled upon, when they have Courage to stand in the Gap; so that too often they can only lament and bemoan what they have not Power to suppress or restrain.

ONE great cause of this prevailing *Immorality*, and General Want of a true Sense of GOD and Religion among us, is the Neglect of Parents and Masters in not bringing their Children and Servants to be Instructed in the First Principles of Christianity, and in not Instilling into them a due Sense of Religion, and their not keeping them to the Reading and Understanding of the *Holy Scripture*.

IV. AS to the present State of the *PAPISTS* in this Kingdom, whose *Conversion* Your MAJESTY has so much at Heart, even under that immense Weight of Affairs, relating, not only to Your own Dominions, but to all *Europe*. We cheerfully embrace this happy Opportunity of contributing our utmost Endeavours to bring this Your ROYAL Will and Pleasure to good effect.

THE *Popish Priests* are generally neither Able nor Willing to Instruct the People in the Fundamental Points of Christianity; so that they, for the most part, live in a stupid Ignorance; They not only, under pain of Damnation, prohibit their People from reading of the Scriptures, but even from hearing them read; and rarely have any such thing as Catechising among them. The People being thus for want of Christian Instruction brought to Believe that their Eternal Ruin or Salvation depends upon the Breath of the Priests, who Save and Damn them at Pleasure, and terrifie them on any Occasion with a positive Sentence of *Damnation*; it is no Wonder that they bear such an Absolute Sway as to keep up still the same continued Aversion to our Religion.

BESIDES this blind Obedience paid to their *Priests*, We humbly offer these following Reasons why the *Reformation* hath, in all this Time, made no farther Progress in this Kingdom.

THE First is the Dependance which the *Papists* have always had upon Foreign Princes. The Pope's Supremacy, and Infallibility being

and detestable Custom of *Duelling* prevails from a false Notion of Honour, in direct Contradiction to the plain Commands of CHRIST and the Spirit of the Gospel, by which the Land is frequently defiled with Blood, *Rioting* and *Drunkenness*, *Adultery*, *Fornication* and *Lasciviousness*, do so much abound among us, that a Sense of the heinous and damning Nature of them seems to be much worn out of the Minds of Men. Many, who pass for Members of the Establish'd Church, rarely appear at the publick Worship of GOD; and many more of those who do, yet seldom frequent the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*, unless for an *Office* or *Employment*; and upon such Worldly Motives, professed Enemies of our Constitution will OCCASIONALLY Communicate with us.

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the principal Points of their Religion, They are apt to imagine that all the States of *Europe*, who are of the Communion of the Church of *Rome*, must be in their Interest; and therefore that a Time may happen when, by Their Assistance, They may root out the *Protestants*, and shake off their Subjection to the Crown of *Great Britain*: And accordingly they have been all along fed with these fond Hopes from the Beginning of the *Reformation*; which happening about the Time when *England* was in Wars with *Spain*, they were taught by their *Priests* to make Religion a Pretence for their *Rebellion*, thereby to engage Foreign Powers to assist them; and upon their being suppressed, all those Forfeiting Persons who fled into Popish Countries, meeting with a kind Reception and Promises of being restored; the Encouragement they received they Communicated to their Friends in *Ireland*. By these Artifices, the poor People, who are naturally Credulous, are still deluded, and kept in Heart from Time to Time; inso-much that they are visibly exalted with the News of any ill Success of Your MAJESTY's Arms and those of the Confederacy, and strangely dejected with the Account we receive of every Victory. Which shews that their Dependance is now chiefly on *France*, for being restored to their Estates, which they think they forfeit all their Hopes of, if they should turn *Protestants*.

ANOTHER apparent Cause is the great Want of a sufficient Number of *Clergy* in most Parts of this Kingdom; the Reason of which is, that, upon the *Dissolution* of *Abbies* and *Monastries*,

nasteries, the Tythes then appropriated for their Support, were granted to *Lay-Men* either in *Fee-Farms* or *Leases*: Many of which *Leases* (tho' now expired) are continued in the same Hands as if they had been *Fee-Farms*. These *Impropriations* being a considerable Part of the Tythe of the whole Kingdom, makes it necessary for the Bishop to unite several adjoining Parishes, to make up a small Provision for a Minister. This, together with there being no *Glebes* in one Parish in Ten, and most of those but small, and often in *scattered Parcels*, together with the Want of *Churches* and *Manse-Houses*, make the *Local Residence* of the Clergy in many Places impracticable. Your MAJESTY has been Graciously pleased already to lay a Foundation for the Buying in of *Impropriations*, by Your Royal Grant of the FIRST FRUITS for that Purpose.

THERE are other concurrent Causes of keeping up the *Popish Interest* in this Kingdom; as *First*, the Unsteadiness of the Measures which have been used towards those of that Perswasion. Sometimes Methods of great Severity have been try'd, and then again, they have been on a sudden indulged and tolerated, and the Laws made with respect to them, rarely executed; which makes them, under the greatest Difficulties, still hope for a Return of the same Connivance and Indulgence.

ANOTHER Cause is the great Number of *Popish Lawyers*, which increases daily, notwithstanding the late *Act* against their practising at the Bar; insomuch that the Number of their Students at the *Inns of Court*, is greater than ever. These find out Ways of evading all
Laws

Laws against *Popery*, and, together with their *Priests*, have been the main Instruments of carrying on Designs against the *Protestant Government*.

THE Laws against *Foreign Education*, not being strictly put in Execution, concurs likewise very much to the keeping up the *Popish Religion and Interest* in this Kingdom: Many Children of the *Papists*, being sent abroad to be educated, return Home seasoned with all the invenom'd Prejudices and pernicious Doctrines of *Popish Seminaries*. To which may be added, that others are educated at Home under *Popish School-Masters*; who, after all our Industry, cannot be sufficiently discovered and suppressed.

ANOTHER Ground of their Hatred to our Church, and no small Hindrance to their Conversion, and which they themselves assign; and frequently object to us; is, the great Variety of *Schismatics* and *Sectaries* among those that call themselves *Protestants*, tho' many of them are of their own Making. This creates in them an invincible Prejudice against us: Seeing so many different *Communions*, they are apt to conclude us all equally erroneous, and stick to their imaginary *Infallibility*. This is the great *Stumbling Block and Rock of Offence* that lies in their Way; and upon which so many Souls are lost and shipwreck'd by continuing in *Idolatry and Superstition*, and a stupid Ignorance of all Religion, which may be added to all the other deplorable Consequences of their Separation.

THE

THE several Particulars Your MAJESTY has been Graciously pleas'd to recommend to our most serious Consideration, are so many Proofs of Your Pious and Wise Designs, for the Good of this Church and People committed to Your Charge, which fills our Hearts with inexpressible Joy and Satisfaction. We pray for Your MAJESTY as Persons truly sensible, that in so doing, we are calling for Spiritual and Temporal Blessings upon us, and our Posterity.

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Ja. Coghill, Reg^r.

F I N I S.

THE Reverend Father, your Majesty has
been graciously pleased to recommend
to our most serious Consideration, and
the many Prayers of Your Pious and Wise
Deputies, for the Good of this Church,
and People committed to Your Charge,
which our Hearts with incessant
pleasure and Satisfaction. We pray for
Your Majesty's long and happy Re-
ign, that in so doing, we are calling
for spiritual and Temporal Blessings up-
on us, and our Posterity.

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